

Our major initiatives, developed annually for the academic year, represent areas of growth, change or improvement which will require focus and collaboration across the colleges and units that comprise Academic Affairs. We simultaneously remain engaged with many other initiatives at the course, program, college and university level. Our initiatives and planning efforts are directly supportive of Ferris State University's mission to "prepare our students for successful careers, responsible citizenship, and lifelong learning."

Strategic Planning

Developing a broadly engaged and accepted university wide strategic plan is an ongoing priority. Based on the mission and core values, the strategic plan will seek to provide a focused direction for all members of the university community.

Online and Virtual Learning

Few opportunities are as important to the future of Ferris as the long-term structure of online offerings in all its forms. This includes developing the right balance of courses and programs, using online to support a strong residential campus, developing the right financial model and implementing a consistent set of standards and procedures. EMAT has provided a strong framework to move forward. The goal for 2014 - 2015 is to finalize these operational components and lay the groundwork for sustained online growth.

Academic Leadership

During the 2013-14 academic year, many departments throughout the University moved from a head model of departmental leadership to a chair model. Creating a culture of effective academic leadership continues to be a high priority for Academic Affairs. For 2014 - 2015, Academic Affairs will continue to support the transition in leadership models by providing opportunities for professional growth for new departmental leaders.

Implementation of Diversity Initiative: The Achievement Gap

During the 2013-14 academic year, Academic Affairs formed an Achievements Gaps Task Force. The charge of the group was to identify factors that affect student achievement, particularly among students from diverse backgrounds, and to make recommendations based on their findings. The goal for the 2014-15 academic year is to begin to implement the recommendations of the Task Force.

Continued Focus on Retention, Graduation and Student Debt

Building on the successes of colleges, departments and programs, it is important that Academic Affairs continues the long term goals of increasing retention and graduation rates while reducing student debt. One of the ongoing efforts of Academic Affairs is to help students successfully move from one semester to the next, one academic year to the next and on to graduation. Each college within Academic Affairs will focus on their roles in promoting high academic standards, providing students with engaged experiences, and keeping students on track toward graduation and beyond while also developing models for reducing time to degree. The overall goals of these efforts are to create a unified approach toward and investment in increasing student retention and graduation while reducing overall student debt.

Project Promesa

Opened in 2012-13, the Center for Latino Studies continues to pilot summer programs for high school students, with the goal of increasing college readiness, especially among students from predominantly Hispanic backgrounds.

Grandville Corridor Project

This project is the collaborative effort of the Michigan College of Optometry, the College of Pharmacy, the College of Health Professions, Mercy Health, The Wege Foundation, Habitat for Humanity, the Hispanic Center of Western Michigan, and the Center for Latino Studies. At present, all partners are engaged in finalizing a Memorandum of Understanding that will allow progress on building the foundation for a community clinic at Clinica Santa Maria. The clinic will eventually provide optometric and pharmaceutical services and facilities as well as opportunities for nursing, dental hygiene, and other College of Health Professions programs. Possibilities for involvement by the School of Education as well as the Social Work Program and the Center for Entrepreneurship also have great potential. The participation of Habitat for Humanity, the Center for Latino Studies, and the Hispanic Center of Western Michigan assures that all parties are working toward, and with cultural sensitivity, a lasting partnership among the academic, business, non-profit, and Hispanic community.

Planning History

Browse through the documents below to gain a better understanding of our planning history. You can also call our office at 231-591-2300 for more information regarding division and college planning.